

Correction Officers' Benevolent Association, Inc.

"Patrolling the Toughest Precincts in New York"



ELIAS HUSAMUDEEN
President

JOSEPH BRACCO
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June 15, 2016

Joseph Ponte, Commissioner
NYC Department of Correction
75-20 Astoria Boulevard
East Elmhurst, NY 11370

Dear Commissioner Ponte,

I am writing to you Commissioner, specifically inquiring on your plan of action to provide redress to the uniformed staff of the New York City Department of Correction.

As you are aware overtime is at astronomical levels with a trajectory that continues to rise. That coupled with an increased turnover rate of future retirees who as of July 1st are eligible to cash out their terminal leave will lead this department to serious staffing shortages and security breaches.

As attrition continues to take its toll the Correction Academy will not be able to meet the demands of this agency. New recruits require four months of training for the Basic Course of Peace Officer with Firearm to meet the requisite requirements as a New York City Correction Officer, as required by the State of New York Division of Criminal Justice Services, Municipal Police Training Council. The current Correction Academy is no longer a viable resource to meet these requirements of the department with its limited capabilities. The department needs to invest in an academy that can support classes that are not limited by the size of its current academy that can at a maximum produce around 600 recruits but to meet the needs of the agency with an academy that can produce 1,500 recruits and provide expanded capabilities for training in a manner consistent with the department's annual training requirements.

In light of the above presented facts it is recommended that the department exercises extreme caution in the future as it assesses this current overtime crisis and provides a complete plan of action. The entire workforce of correction officers is currently working astronomical amounts of overtime. Within the last two years several officers have passed away; in car accidents, on the Rikers Island bridge, at home and at work. Officers are having their lively hood impair their abilities to interact with their families and communities, resulting in divorces and the loss of being able to see their children grow up. Officers are being subjected to extreme employee fatigue, long term sleep deprivation, impaired health in relation to the suppression of an individual's cognitive abilities, suppressed immune systems due to the lack of sleep, all of which increases sick leave use, deteriorates moral, increase medical cost, and increase liabilities.



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Based upon the fact that officers are now also working upwards of 100 hours of overtime per month "almost the full time equivalent of two members of service" it is requested as a part of this plan of action that each probationary officer have their probationary periods reduced to 18 months and placed in permanent status. Ultimately reducing probationary periods during this overtime crisis.

As part of the department's plan of action into the next fiscal year it is recommended that the department take every reasonable step into the mitigation of overtime to include but not limited to the following:

- Immediate freezing or reduction of non-annual PREA & NUNEZ training during the first three senior vacation picks
- Consideration of the closure of a housing facilities to offset overtime and staffing demand
- No new programs pending an influx of recruits or staff to support the increased staffing demand
- Postpone the opening of all future special housing areas and/or new housing areas
- Bring back an age limit to new recruits 32 years old for general public, 35 with military.
- Provide a pension drop (up to five years) for senior staff to consider preserving their service to offset this severe staffing crisis.
- Increase all future recruit class frequencies to ratios that exceed attrition by 2:1 or greater until this staffing crisis is resolved.

I look forward to discussing these matters with you in the near future.

Sincerely,


Elias Nusamudeen
President

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